

# DESERT AND MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Governing Board

**FROM:**  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

**DATE:** November 26, 2012

**SUBJECT:** **Agenda Item V: Consideration of resolution authorizing the transfer of APN's 2545-018-900, 901; 2546-010-901, 902; 2561-007-900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908; 2562-003-901, 902; 2562-004-900 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and, if acquired by Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority, authorizing future potential transfer of APN's 2401-032-003, 005, 006, 007, 008; 2401-034-003; 2561-009-005, 006, 007, 010, 012, 013, 015, 016; 2561-031-003, 004; 2561-033-002, 003; 2562-004-008, 011, 014; 2562-005-003, 004, 006, 007; 2562-006-005, 008 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, La Tuna Canyon, Verdugo Mountains, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the transfer of APN's 2545-018-900, 901; 2546-010-901, 902; 2561-007-900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908; 2562-003-901, 902; 2562-004-900 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and, if acquired by Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority, authorizing future potential transfer of APN's 2401-032-003, 005, 006, 007, 008; 2401-034-003; 2561-009-005, 006, 007, 010, 012, 013, 015, 016; 2561-031-003, 004; 2561-033-002, 003; 2562-004-008, 011, 014; 2562-005-003, 004, 006, 007; 2562-006-005, 008 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, La Tuna Canyon, Verdugo Mountains, City of Los Angeles.

Background: At its September 2011 meeting, the Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority (DMCA) authorized the acceptance of an approximately 600-acre collection of parcels that encompass the majority of the open space area required by the City of Los Angeles' 2004 approval of the Canyon Hills (Whitebird) project in the northern Verdugo Mountains. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) had accepted a conservation easement over all 600 acres in 2010.

In late 2011, the DMCA took title to fourteen of the subject parcels, located both on the north and south side of the 210 Freeway, totaling 259 acres. The attached figures show both the total 600-acre open space area and the portion of the acreage that the DMCA has taken title to subject to conservation easements held by the MRCA. Whitebird has delayed transfer of the remaining parcels to the DMCA, or any other public agency, until a determination is made about whether or not they need any of the remaining land for habitat mitigation activities.

The September 2011 DMCA staff report on the subject land dedication acceptance was clear that DMCA ownership would be brief because the DMCA does not have the resources to manage the subject property nor the interest in the incumbent liability.

Whitebird is now eager to transfer the remaining property to a public agency. It now appears that the passage of one years time makes it possible for Whitebird to transfer the remaining parcels directly to the MRCA. The proposed action would authorize the fee simple transfer of the existing 14 DMCA parcels to the MRCA. In addition the proposed action would authorize the future transfer of the remaining open space parcels to the MRCA, if for some unknown, unlikely reason they had to first be held by the DMCA.

If authorized the transfer of all the subject parcels to the MRCA could occur prior to 2013. The MRCA Governing Board will consider its part of the proposed action at its December 5, 2012 meeting.